

Working on the



Work:

Day One

New Jersey Department of Education Professional
Learning Communities Lab School Project

Lois Brown Easton

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Note: Thanks to Phillip C. Schlechty for the title of this workshop, which is the title of his book published in 2002 by Jossey-Bass.

Working on the Work: Day One

Description:

These two workshops are all about deepening the discussions about the work educators do. In order to deepen discussion, participants need both an artifact and a process. In these two workshops, participants will first look at WHY discussions about education need to “go deeper.” Then, they will learn WHAT they can do to deepen discussions. Finally, they will focus on HOW they can deepen discussions in their own environments. During these two days, participants will engage actively and interactively in strategies for deepening discussions. . .and working on the work of educators and students.



Essential Questions:

1. Why should educators dig deeply into their own work in order to address complex problems of teaching and learning?
2. How can educators dig deeply into their own work in order to address complex problems of teaching and learning?

Outcomes:

Participants will (Know, Understand, Do/KUD):

Know

- The importance of using artifacts and processes for working on the work.
- Two processes for digging deeply.
- Several processes for discussion.
- The process of dialogue.

Understand

- Why it is important to dig deeply into the work of education to address complex problems of teaching and learning.
- The logic models related to PLCs , working on the work, and deep discussion.
- The differences between dialogue and discussion.

Do

- Practice two processes for digging deeply.
- Use dialogue in a variety of discussions.
- Use a variety of other processes for discussion.
- Reflect and debrief frequently with each other.
- Determine who, what, where, when, why and how in terms of using these processes in their own environments.
- Develop first steps for using these processes in their own environments.
- Use these processes in their own environments.
- Give and get feedback on ideas for implementation.

Agenda:

Day One

9:00	Welcome and introductions
9:15	Opening activity
9:30	<u>Why</u> deep discussion: R & D (reflection and debriefing)
10:00	Logic models (PowerPoint) R & D (reflection and debriefing)
10:30	<u>What</u> : Process #1 w/ Artifact #1: Tuning protocol w/ student work
11:30	R & D (reflection and debriefing)
12:00	<u>How</u> : Who, what, when, where, why and how (template)
1:00	Triad protocol for feedback
1:30	Last word protocol for closure

Some References And Resources

**Allen, D. (Ed.) (1998). *Assessing student learning: From grading to understanding*. New York: Teachers College Press.

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*McDonald, J. P., Mohr, N., Dichter, A., & McDonald, E. G. (2003). *The power of protocols: An educator's guide to better practice*. New York: Teachers College Press.

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*Weinbaum, A., Allen, D., Blythe, T., Simon, K., Seidel, S., & Rubin, C. (2004). *Teaching as inquiry: Asking hard questions to improve practice and student achievement*. New York: Teachers College Press (and NSDC).

York-Barr, J., Sommers, W., Ghere, G. and Montie, J. (2001). *Reflective Practice to Improve Schools*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

*The Practitioner Inquiry Series, edited by Marilyn Cochran-Smith and Susan L. Lytle.

**The Series on School Reform, edited by Patricia A. Wasley, Ann Lieberman, and Joseph P. McDonald.

About Your Facilitator

Lois Easton works as a consultant, coach, and author. She is particularly interested in learning designs – for adults and for students. She recently retired as Director of Professional Development at Eagle Rock School and Professional Development Center, Estes Park, Colorado. Easton was Director of Re:Learning Systems at the Education Commission of the States (ECS) from 1992 to 1994. Re:Learning was a partnership between the Coalition of Essential Schools (CES) at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island, and ECS. Prior to that, Easton served in the Arizona Department of Education as English/Language Arts Coordinator and then became Director of Curriculum and Instruction, and then, Director of Curriculum and Assessment Planning.

A middle school English teacher for 15 years, Easton earned her Ph.D. at the University of Arizona. Easton has been a frequent presenter at conferences and a contributor to educational journals. She is currently co-president of the Colorado Staff Development Council.

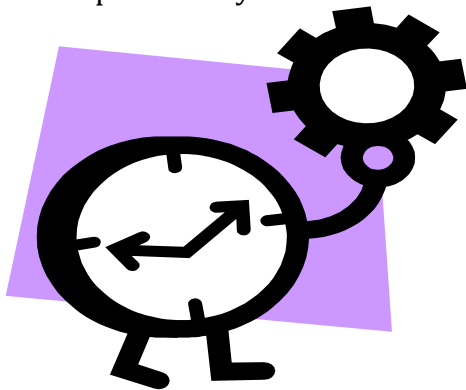
Her book *The Other Side of Curriculum: Lessons From Learners* was published by Heinemann in 2002. She is editor of and contributor to a book published by the National Staff

Development Council (NSDC) in August 2004, with a revision in 2008: *Powerful Designs for Professional Learning*. Corwin Press published her third book, *Engaging the Disengaged: How Schools Can Help Struggling Students Succeed* in 2008. This book won the Educational Book of the Year Award from Kappa Delta Gamma in 2009. ASCD has just published her fourth book, *Protocols for Professional Learning*. Her fifth book, *Professional Learning Communities by Design: Putting the Learning Back Into PLCs*, will be published July 2011 by NSDC (now LearningForward) and Corwin Press.

You can reach her at 4643 Burgundy Lane, Boulder, CO 80301-5377; 303-527-2733 or 303-517-5084; leastoners@aol.com.

Opening Activity: 30-60-90 (thanks to Dan Moraio, Oakland, CA)

- 30: Think of something that you have LEARNED ABOUT PLCs. Take a moment to write about what you have learned and what your learning means. Find someone you don't know. Introduce yourselves and share what you have learned; write down what your partner says. Thank each other.
- 60: Find someone else you don't know. Introduce yourselves and share what you have learned and what your first partner told you; write down what your partner says.



90: Find someone else you don't know. Introduce yourselves and share what you have learned and what your first and second partners told you; write down what your partner says.





Return to your own table and share with colleagues one or two highlights from 30-60-90.





If you would like additional resources about PLCs or protocols, such as research related to PLCs or background on PLCs or other protocols – even a fun PLC survey -- please email me at leastoners@aol.com.

WHY DEEP DISCUSSIONS?

With your colleagues at your table, work on this chart. You do not have to complete every box – just those that occur to you. Look for reasons educators need to dive deeply into issues and needs.

A Decade in Review + A Look Forward

What's Happening:	<i>School Years 2000-2005</i>	SCHOOL YEARS 2006-2010	School Years 2011-2015
In the World 			
In the United States 			
In New Jersey 			
In Our Communities 			

What's Happening:	<i>School Years 2000-2005</i>	SCHOOL YEARS 2006-2010	School Years 2011-2015
In Our Districts 			
In Our Schools 			
In Terms of Students 			
In Terms of Educators 			

Given what you have noticed above about our changing world, what are some reasons for diving deeply into discussions about teaching and learning? Be prepared to share.

Which do you think we have in terms of education today? Read the chart below and then circle the problems in the list that you think are wicked problems.

Tame Problems¹	Wicked Problems
An algorithm exists. Can be worked “inside the box” Lend themselves to action research. Direct and discernible cause-and-effect relationships are apparent. Interactions may be complex but are not dynamical. Properties of the system maintain their identity before, during, and after interactions.	Known algorithms are inadequate. Require new mental models. Are dynamical, producing emergent phenomena within systems and subsystems. Have a fractal nature [repeating patterns] Recur, folding back on themselves and amplify with each iteration. Contain values conflicts rooted in self-sealing logic [not open to discussion].

curriculum development

curriculum alignment

reporting practices

assessment development

assessment alignment

organizational development

professional development

accountability

special education

district culture

school culture

professional responsibilities

data collection

equity of resources

instructional practices

parent expectations

principal evaluations

teacher evaluations

response to intervention

ELL

other:

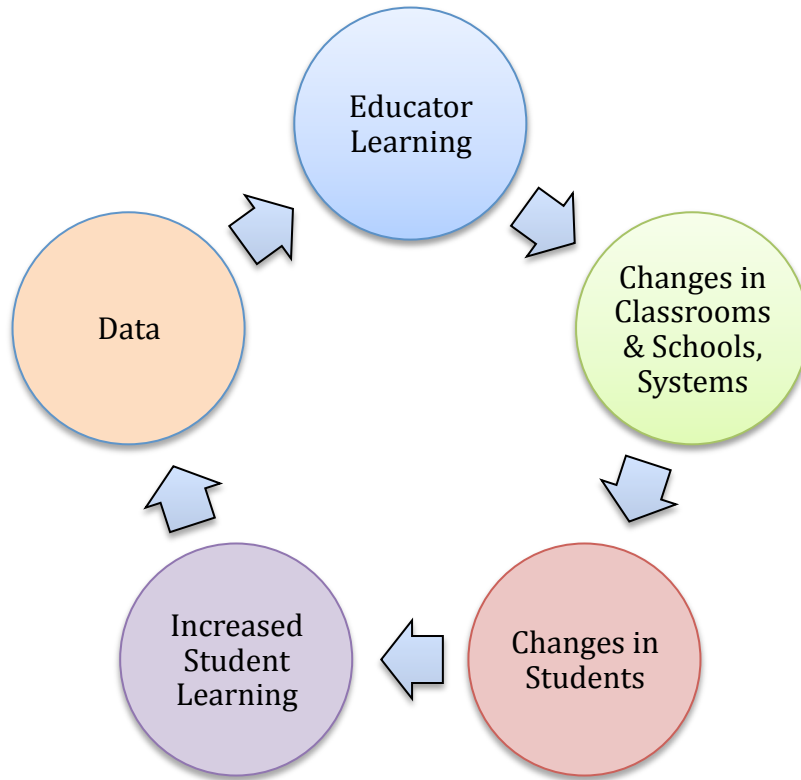
¹ Robert J. Garmston and Bruce M. Wellman. (1999). *The adaptive school: A sourcebook for developing collaborative groups*. Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon Publishers, pp. 224-5.

R&D (Reflection and Debriefing) #1:

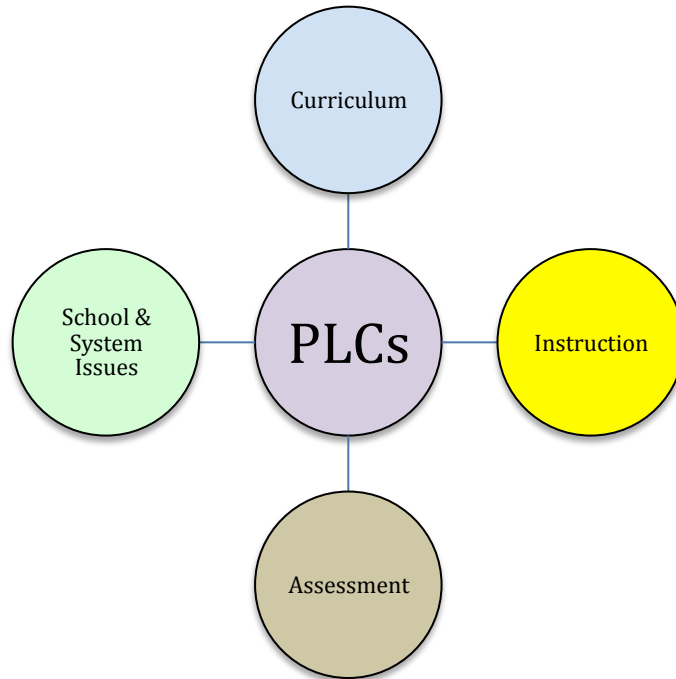
	If. . . .	Then this. . . .
Hypothesis #1		
Hypothesis #2		
Hypothesis #3		
What I'm still wondering....		

Thanks to Stevi Quate, Denver, CO

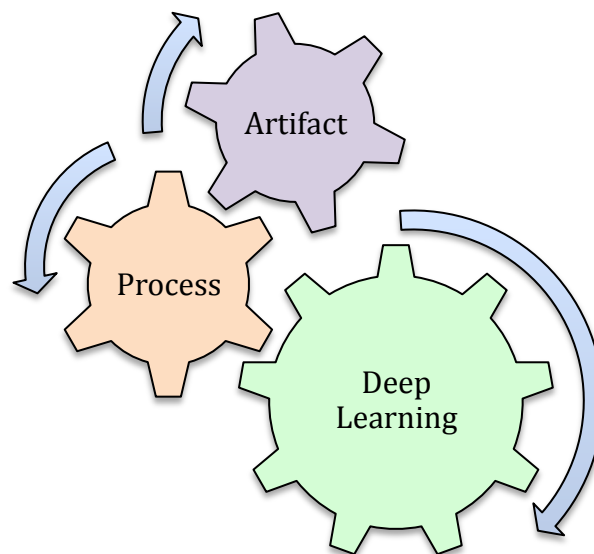
My Hypotheses for Working on the Work: #1



#2



#3



R&D #2:**NOTE CATCHER**

(Thanks to Stevi Quate, Denver, CO)

NOTICINGS

Thinking about what has happened so far in this workshop, pay attention below to what you noticed.

WONDERINGS

Thinking about what has happened so far in this workshop, write down below what you want to think more about.

WHAT CAN WE DO TO HAVE DEEP DISCUSSIONS?

TUNING PROTOCOLS

A Process for Reflection on Teacher and Student Work

OVERVIEW

What Are Tuning Protocols?

They are a professional learning process that honors the work we as educators are trying to do (our practice). They help us fine **TUNE** (think of tuning a radio to get the clearest reception or tuning a car so that it runs better) our practice using a **PROTOCOL** or formal process for examining our work in a supportive, problem-solving group.

How Were Tuning Protocols Developed?

They were developed by David Allen, Joe McDonald and others at the Coalition of Essential Schools (CES), Brown University, Providence, RI. They are featured in the March 1995 edition of “Horace,” the publication of CES. McDonald characterizes them as a way “a teacher presents actual work before a group of thoughtful ‘critical friends’ in a structured reflective discourse aimed at ‘tuning’ the work to higher standards” (p. 2). McDonald wrote about tuning protocols in his essay “Three Pictures of an Exhibition,” available through the Coalition.

Tuning protocols were first developed as a way to critique the design and context for student exhibitions. Its use was expanded into inquiry about student work in general, with the student work being used as a lens for examining any aspect of the teaching-learning process. Tuning protocols can also be used to examine directly any aspect of teaching and learning, such as lesson plans, assignments, assessments, portfolios. Actually, they can be used to examine any issue of importance, such as a new policy or process.

Tuning protocols have given rise to a variety of other protocols, such as the descriptive review, the California protocol, the ATLAS protocol, the charette, the consultancy, the collaborative assessment conference, the future protocol, the issue discussion protocol, and others. Many of these are featured on the Wichita School District website.

How Do They Work?

The process on the next page will help you conduct your own tuning protocols.

Why Do Protocols Work?

Our experience is that protocols work because they are a risk-free way to get at what makes a difference in learning. The protocol prevents attacks and rebuttals. Presenters often state that they feel good, even flattered, by having so many people take so seriously some part of their practice. They learn a great deal -- but so do the people in the group who are considering the presenter's practice, even people for whom the content of the protocol seems unrelated to their own work.

The tuning protocol also works because it allows participants to think deeply about classroom practice, arrive at creative solutions, and connect with colleagues. Protocols stimulate a learning community.

The protocol is based on some important assumptions. These help create a culture that is risk-free and promotes deep learning.

Assumptions That Make a Protocol Work

1. We all want to get better in the work we do as educators.
2. We all want to be kind and courteous and, in order to accomplish #1, we also need to be thoughtful, insightful, and provocative.
3. We need to remember that we are "in this together." In other words, even though we are tuning work one educator has brought to the tuning protocol, the effect of our tuning will be far beyond the effect on that one educator and the work that educator brought to be tuned. It is OUR work that we are tuning, and the outcome will be improved learning for all of us and our students. Tuning is truly a collaborative process.

HOW TO DO A TUNING PROTOCOL

Note: Times are for an hour-long TP; they can be adjusted for a shorter or longer period of time. When adjusting for time, be sure to allow for all steps in the protocol.

1. Introduction (about 10 minutes, **first time only**)
 - If participants don't usually work together have participants briefly introduce themselves.
 - Briefly introduce information about protocols, guidelines and this process; establish time limits (can be adapted from stated limits)
 - Explore the assumptions that are important to making protocols work.

Note: For this protocol (and any other with more than one tuning group), have the group select members to play the following roles: Timekeeper, Table Facilitator, Feedback Monitor, and Key Questions Monitor.

2. Presentation (about 15 minutes)
 - Participants are quiet, taking notes. They do not interrupt the presenter.
 - Presenter sets the context, describes the teaching/learning situation
 - Presenter shares materials related to the practice being described, including student work. When student work is being presented, the presenter should allow participants part of this time to examine this work.
 - Presenter poses one or two key questions to be answered about the practice.

3. Clarifying Questions (maximum 5 minutes)
 - Participants ask non-evaluative questions about the presentation, such as “What happened before X? What did you do next? What did Y say?”
 - Facilitator should guard against questions that approach evaluation, such as “Why didn’t you try X?” If someone asks an evaluative question, that person may be invited to rephrase the question as clarifying or save it for participant discussion below.
 - It is entirely possible that the group will not get all its questions answered (there never is enough time!), but members have enough information to conduct a productive protocol.

4. Individual Writing (about 5 minutes)
 - This part of the protocol helps each participant focus and have something to say during the Participant Discussion.
 - Participants write about the presentation, addressing the key question(s).
 - The presenter should write on the key question during this time, also.

5. Participant Discussion (about 15 minutes)
 - The presenter is completely silent during this step, taking notes, perhaps turned away from the group to avoid eye contact.
 - The participants “own” what is to be tuned; it is theirs to improve, with the presenter listening in.
 - Participants have a discussion among themselves based on issues raised during the presentation, striving to deepen their understanding of the situation, and seeking answers to the question(s) posed by the presenter.
 - Participants should strive for a balance of “warm” and “cool” feedback unless instructed differently by the presenter (see Critical Aspects, below).
 - Participants should strive to “contribute to substantive discourse” (see Critical Aspects, below).
 - Facilitator should watch for “air time” issues and focus on the work (not the presenter) and comments that are not true to the assumptions.
 - Feedback Monitor should watch for balance of warm and cool feedback.
 - Key Questions Monitor should watch for attention to the key question(s), making sure it is addressed (although participants can raise and address other questions and issues, too).

Note: At some point during the Participant Discussion, the Facilitator and Monitor should report to the

group how they are doing and recommend adjustments as needed.

6. Presenter Reflection (about 15 minutes)
 - Participants are silent, taking notes on the presenter reflection.
 - Presenter reflects aloud on the participants' discussion, using the issues the participants raised to deepen understanding and reflecting on possible answers to the questions posed. Presenter can also project future actions, questions, dilemmas, etc.
 - Although presenter does not have to do this, presenter may correct misunderstandings.
7. Debriefing (about 10 minutes)
 - Presenter discusses how well the protocol worked. Then participants discuss how well they think the protocol worked.
 - The group thanks the presenter(s).
 - Presenter and participants engage in more general discussion of the content of the protocol as well as the process itself.

CRITICAL ASPECTS OF DOING A TUNING ON YOUR OWN

Be vigilant about keeping time. You need to be sure to work through the entire protocol for the process to be effective. Do not let one person monopolize any part of the protocol.

Try to gather the same group each time you do a protocol. If presenters come from within a group of people who will, themselves, do a protocol, they'll feel a little less intimidated about sharing the work they and/or their students are doing. The group should be somewhat protective of the presenter--by making their work public, presenters expose themselves to a critique. The facilitator should help participants recast or withdraw inappropriate comments. The facilitator can also ask how "tough" the presenter wants participants to be.

Although kind and courteous, participants should also be thoughtful and provocative. McDonald calls this "warm" and "cool" feedback. Nothing is gained if participants only praise, but praise should be part of a protocol: What worked? Nothing is gained if participants only criticize, but a critique should be part of a protocol: What would help students learn better? Tuning protocols work best if participants and presenters think of their work as a collaboration to help students learn.

Warm Feedback: Statements that let the presenter know what is working. Warm feedback takes the form of praise for what seems to be effective.

Cool Feedback: Statements or questions that help the presenter move forward. They are less criticism than they are a critique of the work that is

oriented towards improving the work and the context within which the work was done. Cool feedback is never about the presenter -- only about what the presenter has brought to be tuned. **The best cool feedback occurs through “What if. . .” questions such as, “I wonder what would happen if. . . .”**

“Be provocative of substantive discourse.” Many presenters may be used to blanket praise. Without thoughtful but probing ‘cool’ questions and comments, they won’t benefit from the tuning protocol experience. Presenters often say they’d have liked more cool feedback” (“Horace,” March 1995, p. 2).

Have an outside facilitator who does not participate in the process, at least for the first tuning. The facilitator should make sure all steps are followed, keep time, be sure that the group acts according to the assumptions, monitor “air time,” check for the balance of warm and cool feedback, and make sure the group addresses the presenter’s key question(s). Without a facilitator, consider having participants take on these roles.

Other questions appropriate to using student work as a lens for teaching and learning practices include these: What does the work tell us about what the student knows or can do? What habits of mind are reflected in this piece? Is this piece exemplary for our school? For other schools? Does this piece represent mastery? How could this student go deeper or broader? What is needed to make this work better?

TIMING WORKSHEET

Use this worksheet to plan how you will divide the time for a tuning. Times given are for a one-hour tuning without Introduction.

Total Time Available: _____

1. Introduction (first time only, about 5 minutes) _____
2. Presentation (about 15 minutes) _____
3. Clarifying Questions (about 5 minutes) _____
4. Individual Writing (about 5 minutes) _____
5. Participant Discussion (about 15 minutes) _____
6. Presenter Reflection (about 15 minutes) _____

7. Debriefing (5 minutes minimum) _____***A GUIDE FOR MATCHING PROTOCOLS TO NEEDS***

To be used as a guide in identifying the best protocol for a person's or group's given needs

Best protocols to use with:	Suggested protocols:
Student Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Atlas • The Charrette • Collaborative Assessment • Descriptive Review • Tuning • Vertical Slice
Teacher/Educator/Organization Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assignment • Collaborative Assessment • Future • Standards in Practice • Tuning • Vertical Slice
Professional dilemmas, questions or process issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Charrette • Consultancy • Critical Incidents • Future • Peeling the Onion • Vertical Slice
Data-based materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Atlas • Vertical Slice

Useful Websites

Annenberg Institute: <http://www.annenberginstitute.org/>

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development: www.ascd.org

Coalition of Essential Schools:

www.essentialschools.org/cs/resrouces/view/ces_res/57

Colorado Critical Friends Group: www.coloradocfg.org

Looking At Student Work: www.lasw.org

Maine Department of Education:

www.elm.maine.edu/development/tools/atlas.stm

National School Reform Faculty: <http://www.nsrfharmony.org/>

National Staff Development Council: www.nsd.org

Rutgers: cesp.rutgers.edu/events/CFG03-1.html

Star Tech Program: www.startechprogram.org/stech/lasw.html

FACILITATOR RESPONSIBILITIES FOR A SUCCESSFUL PROTOCOL

(And How to Do One Without A Facilitator)

What a Facilitator Does

What To Do Without a Facilitator

Before the Tuning

Selects the presenter	Someone in the group volunteers
Helps the presenter with choice of work to be tuned and key questions	Previous presenters assist with choice of work to be tuned and key questions
Convenes the group	Group decides on date, time, place
Does the overview (first time only)	Participants read the overview directions and complete them
Asks how “tough” the presenter wants the participants to be – that is, how much warm and cool feedback the presenter wants.	Any of the participants asks the presenter how tough the participants should be --_that is, how much warm and cool feedback the presenter wants.

During the Tuning

Sets the tone for the protocol; reminds participants about the assumptions; the responsibility for contributing to substantive discourse; warm and cool feedback; addressing the presenter’s key question(s); “air time”; and focus on the work, not the presenter.	One participant – experienced in the process – takes on this job.
Keeps time.	Have one participant serve as timekeeper. Distribute or write on the board the times for each section so all participants know start and stop times.

Monitors Participant Discussion for the appropriate balance of warm and cool feedback. Provides feedback to the group midway, if appropriate.	Have one participant agree to listen for the appropriate balance of warm and cool feedback. This person provides feedback midway, if appropriate.
Protects the presenter if comments are directed towards him/her rather than the work or are otherwise inappropriate.	Have one participant agree to listen for comments that are directed towards the presenter instead of the work or are otherwise inappropriate. This person should inform the group if comments are inappropriate.
Checks to be sure that no one is monopolizing the discussion.	Have one participant agree to be sure that no one is monopolizing the discussion.
Checks to see if the group has responded to the presenter's key questions.	Have one participant agree to check to see if the group has responded to the presenter's key questions.
Does a "process check" midway during the Participant Discussion to report on anything that isn't going as it should.	Does a "process check" midway during the Participant Discussion to report on anything that isn't going as it should.
Can participate in the discussion by announcing intention to do so.	Participates in the discussion.

During the Debriefing of The Tuning

Thanks the presenter and participants.	Participants should thank the presenter. (Presenter will likely do the same to participants.)
Asks the presenter and then the participants to reflect on what they learned from the	Presenter reflects on what was learned from the protocol and how it went for them.

protocol and how it went for them.	
Facilitates continued discussion of the content.	Participants and presenter engage freely in discussion of the content of the tuning protocol.

***WHAT THE PRESENTER DOES TO PREPARE FOR A TUNING
(ESPECIALLY OF STUDENT WORK)***

Deciding What Is To Be Tuned:

- Any written form (essay, creative writing, test, portfolio, etc.)
- A performance, interview, presentation, demonstration, etc., on videotape or audiotape
- A piece of art in any form
- A computer multimedia presentation (consider showing on a screen rather than a monitor)
- aAdisplay (collage, poster, diorama, etc.)

Also remember that any aspect of professional work can be tuned – from budgets to units, from curriculum designs to rubrics, from homework policies to district policies, from intramural plans to summer session schedules. . . .

Choosing the Piece(s) to Be Tuned

- Make sure what you choose is accessible to participants in the tuning protocol; that is, it can be viewed or read or listened to by all during the 15 minute presenter time. For written forms, you'll probably need as many copies of the artifact as you have participants in your tuning group.
- Choose any of the following:
 - One piece for one student
 - One piece from several students
 - Multiple pieces from the same student
 - Drafts of a single piece from a single student over time
- Also consider how you choose the piece. It can be any of the following:

- A piece that represents “best”
 - A piece that represents “worst”
 - A piece that’s right in the middle
 - A randomly chosen piece
- Finally, you may consider presenting a final draft or a piece in progress or rough draft.
 - Note: You should make a part of your presentation an explanation of how you chose the work. Also, be sure to explain how you set up the situation that led to production of the student work you are presenting: the assignment, what came before the assignment, what students did after they completed it, whether or not they were encouraged to have drafts, whether they worked in groups or alone on the piece being tuned, whether or not they were encouraged to have help with the piece from peers or instructors, etc.

How to Devise Key Questions (for student work as well as professional practice)

1. In a one-hour tuning, limit your key questions to one to three, no more. If you have a longer tuning, you may add other questions.
2. You may want to ask some factual questions such as, “What does this work tell about what this student knows and is able to do?”
3. You may also want to devise some quality questions: “Is this piece good enough for students at our school?” You can be more specific, such as “eighth grade students at our school,” and you can be broader, too, with “any eighth grade student in the United States.” You might want to ask a follow-up question: “How can we help this student (and all students) make it good enough?”
4. You can focus on teaching and learning. “What can we say about this student as a learner? How does what we can say about this student apply to other students?”
5. You can focus on changes in curriculum, instruction, and assessment: “Is this an important thing for students to do at our school?” “Does it get at

what students should know and are able to do?” “Does it offer us a chance to look at student achievement of standards?” “How could the instruction that surrounds this work help students execute a better product or outcome?” “How can I assess this piece of student work?” “What kind of a rubric would get at what makes a quality performance of this piece?”

6. You could also focus on classroom and school conditions for learning. “What changes might be made in my classroom that would help students learn better -- and, thus, be able to produce better results?” “What changes might be made in this school to support student learning in the classroom?”
7. If you are formulating key questions about professional practice, you might ask similar questions: How can I make this project better? How can I make sure this policy will bring about the desired result? What should my team do next?

(From Lois Brown Easton. Parts adapted from publications of the Coalition of Essential Schools, Brown University. Parts from ASCD’s video project *Examining Student Work*. Parts from NSDC’s *Powerful Designs for Professional Learning*, 2004. Parts adapted from Lois Brown Easton, 2009, *Protocols for Professional Learning*, ASCD.)

FOR THE PARTICIPANTS

Standard: All students will know that tables and graphs can show how values of one quantity are related to values of another. Use a graph to identify, interpolate, and/or extrapolate a trend in data.

Assignment:

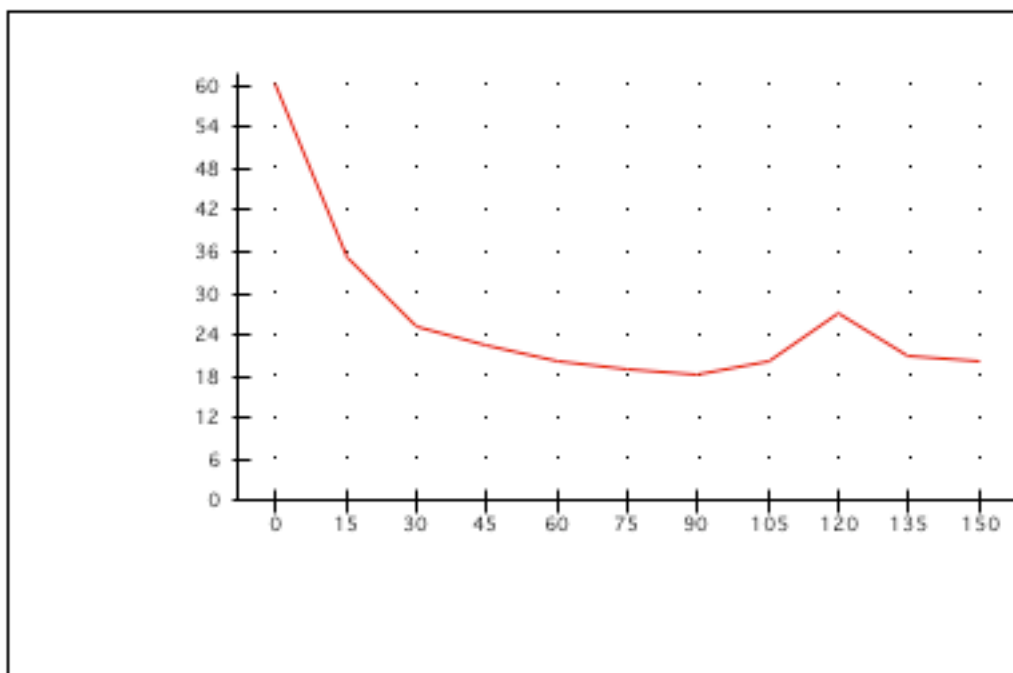
At home a student has made herself a cup of hot chocolate. The graph shows the temperature of the hot chocolate over time.

1. Describe the trend of temperature shown on the graph.
2. Explain why you think the temperature graph looks the way it does.

Presenter's Key Questions:

1. Does the student achieve the standard? At a level appropriate for fifth graders?
2. What can I do to help this student improve the response?

Chart Students Were Given:



How Hot Is Hot Chocolate?

By _____

My friend Nancy made a cup of hot chocolate. She made it in the microwave. She noticed that it got cool very quickly.

The next time she made hot chocolate, she used a thermometer and some graph paper. She put the thermometer into the hot chocolate right after she took it out of the microwave. It was pretty hot! 60 degrees.

But it got really cool within 15 minutes. It went down to 36 degrees. She measured it after 30 minutes it was only a little bit cooler 24 degrees. It stayed about that cool for a long time.

My theory is that Nancy got upset about how cool her hot chocolate was. She put it back into the microwave to warm it up. But she didn't leave it in very long it only went up to about 25 degrees.

I think that you should drink hot chocolate right after it gets out of the microwave.

R&D #3

What We Did:

What I Learned:

Reflection on What I Learned:

How I Might Use What I Learned:

HOW MIGHT WE IMPLEMENT DEEP DISCUSSION VIA THE TUNING PROTOCOL?

?

Who	What	When	■	Where	Why	How
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First Steps:

Whom would you involve? **How?**

Why would you involve these people?

Doing what?

When?

Where?

A Resource for Action: Professional Learning Communities

Lois Brown Easton

Best Way to Start:

- Principal hears about PLCs from faculty or from outside school
- The school's faculty has heard about PLCs
- The principal and interested faculty meet to discuss PLCs
- They form a design team to study
- The design team presents to the entire faculty
- Faculty who are interested join a PLC; other faculty do not (that's OK)
- The principal is part of one or more school PLCs; may have a PLC of principals, as well
- PLCs begin to meet and spread the word about what they're doing
- Other faculty hear about the work being done in PLCs and join (not all join, however)

Other Ways to Start:

#1:

- Interested faculty (2 – 5 people) begin meeting as a PLC
- They share what they're doing with the principal and with other faculty through email/blog/other; present learning at faculty, department or grade level meetings
- Little-by-little, other faculty express interest and join or start their own PLCs
- Not all faculty belong to a PLC; some faculty belong to more than one.

#2

- The principal hears about PLCs and wants to implement them in the school (the principal may have a district mandate related to forming PLCs but has some options in terms of how to do so)
- The principal presents the concept to faculty and they study it and visit/talk with people from schools that have PLCs
- The principal gives faculty a choice about which PLCs to form and which they can join
- Everybody is part of at least one PLC.

One Not-So-Good Way to Form PLCs

- The principal is mandated by the superintendent/other district staff to form PLCs.
- The principal mandates that all teachers will be in a PLC and determines what the PLCs will be and who will be in them

Addressing Buy-in

“Buy-in” is an issue when someone wants someone else to do something and like it. In other words, it is an issue when people do not have a voice or choice in terms of what they’re doing.

If people have voice and choice, there is usually not an issue with “buy-in,” so it is important in terms of PLCs not to force people to participate or give them lots of choices if PLCs are mandated. They should also have a voice in terms of how PLCs are formed and what they do.

Ideally those who do not want to participate will not be forced to do so. It may be that, over time and as they witness the excitement of learning in PLCs, they’ll elect to join a PLC, but they should not be forced.

If forced to be in a PLC, resisters cannot be persuaded to “buy in.” People who have no choice about something will not be persuaded by attempts to get them to “buy in.” Resisters might be invited to form their own PLCs or reside as observers in other PLCs.

A Variety of PLCs

PLCs can be

Whole faculty if the school is small enough. A PLC should be no larger than 10-12 people, so if the school has more faculty, the PLC should break up into groups of no more than 10 – 12. The minimum number for a PLC is 3.

Care should be taken in a whole faculty PLC not to mix business with professional learning. There should be separate meeting times (and places, if possible) for meeting and for learning.

Departments or grade levels, if the 3 to 12 number of people is met. . .and IF the departments and grade level groups agree NOT to mix business with

learning. There should be separate meeting times (and places, if possible) for meeting and for learning.

Vertical learning teams of 3 to 12. These can be in the same subject area in middle and high schools. Again, the VLTs should agree not to mix business with learning.

Interdisciplinary teams of 3 to 12 in middle and high schools. As above, the interdisciplinary teams should agree not to mix business with learning.

Faculty who want to learn together in groups of 3 to 12.

Principals can meet with faculty PLCs as a regular member of the PLC without the status usually accorded to them – that is, they must be careful not to “pull rank” during PLC time and concentrate on learning along with others.

Essentials of PLC Agendas

At Their First Meeting, PLCs Should

- Establish norms (including a norm about what to do when norms are broken)
- Determine purpose of the PLC and related goals (based on school goals)
- Set dates, time, and place for meeting well in advance (at least a semester)
- Establish procedures (facilitator rotations, for example)
- Determine ways to be accountable (i.e., sharing results of learning with the entire faculty; keeping a PLC journal or portfolio; publishing what happens)

At All Meetings, PLCs Should

- Provide a way to check-in (ranging from a simple “How are you today?” to a variety of techniques, such as comparing self to an object or choosing a number from 1-10)
- Remind each other of norms and agree to follow them at the beginning of the meeting
- Remind participants of the date, time and place of the next meeting
- Decide on who will facilitate the next meeting
- Determine specifics related to the learning activities for the next meeting
- Check on how well the group met the norms during the current meeting

A Developmental Approach to PLCs

- The first few PLC meetings might focus on more objective activities, such as book or article study
- More subjective activities, such as looking at student work can be woven into PLCs as the group matures

Some Sample Agendas

#1

- Check-in
- Review of Norms
- **Socratic Seminar (Dialogue) Related to an Article**
- Details About Next Meeting (when & where)
- Decision About Activity for Next Meeting
- Decision about Who Will
- Facilitate Next Meeting
- Decision About Sharing
- What Was Learned At This PLC Meeting With Others
- Group Evaluation of How Norms Were Kept

#2

- Check-in
- Review of Norms
- **Tuning Protocol on Student Work Sample**
- **Dialogue on a Relevant Article**
- Details About Next Meeting (when & where)
- Decision About Activity for Next Meeting
- Decision about Who Will
- Facilitate Next Meeting
- Decision About Sharing
- What Was Learned At This PLC Meeting With Others
- Group Evaluation of How Norms Were Kept

Other PLC Activities

***Accessing Student Voices** – Focus groups and interviews with students on what the PLC is studying/any aspect of the school/school improvement

***Action Research** – Based on data, a change that is made in teaching and learning, classroom and school environments, etc., that is studied closely, with ending data about the effectiveness of change

***Assessment as Professional Development** – Developing common assessments, classroom assessments, and other assessments as a team; developing rubrics and

using scoring procedures on developed assessments; learning from engaging in this process

***Case Discussions** – Using published case studies or developing case studies and then engaging in dialogue on them according to key questions that arise from them

***Classroom Walkthroughs with Reflective Inquiry** – Faculty visiting each other's classrooms for 3-5 minutes to observe what is present in the classroom, generally or specifically (related to some aspect of teaching and learning that is being studied); reporting observations and designing inquiry questions that help the whole group learn

***Curriculum Design** – Engaging in a review of current curriculum and revision of that curriculum from a backwards planning point of view (backwards from a final outcome); mapping the curriculum or part of the curriculum to look for design flaws (omissions or redundancy) and revising it.

***Data Analysis** – Engaging in data driven discussions on the basis of a variety of data (from test scores to student portfolios); focusing on demographics, perceptions, what the school is doing to help learners, as well as achievement.

***Dialogue** – Dialogue is the format that most PLCs should use, rather than discussion or debate because most PLCs want to deepen their understanding, not make decisions. Practicing dialogue with articles and chapters from books can help a PLC learn how to use dialogue rather than discussion or debate when looking at what educators do in classrooms (their practice), student work, and problems and issues.

****Dialogue Protocols** – Dialogue protocols help PLC participants use dialogue rather than discussion to probe an idea or a topic. Some are text-based (based on an article, a chapter, a book, a video, etc.); some are not. Text-based protocols include Three Levels of Text Protocol and the Four As Protocol. Non-text-based protocols include the Last Word Protocol, and the Chalk-Talk Protocol.

Error Analysis – Participants in a PLC can bring student work that puzzles them. The PLC group can use a protocol for examining student work (below) to help them determine why the student is making the error and how to help the student correct his/her misunderstanding. Error analysis is based on a belief that students do not randomly make errors, that errors are a window into their understanding (or misunderstanding).

****Examining Student Work** – A variety of protocols can help make this activity protective of the teacher who brings student work to be shared; these protocols also deepen the dialogue: the Tuning Protocol, Rounds (the Descriptive Review), the Vertical Slice, and the Collaborative Assessment Conference). , p. 47

****Examining Teacher Practice** – A variety of protocols can help make this activity protective of the teacher who brings some aspect of classroom practice to be shared; these protocols also deepen the dialogue: the Consultancy, Standards in Practice, the Success Analysis Protocol, the Triad Protocol. The Tuning Protocol also works well for examining teacher practice.

***Immersing Teachers in Practice** – Deepening the learning of content area teachers by having them BE mathematicians, BE writers, BE historians, etc., and then apply what they have learned to teaching these subjects (see the National Writing Project).

***Journaling** – An individual activity that is enriched when journal writers (who may or may not be focusing on the same topic) share their journal entries with each other and reflect aloud with each other. May be focused on studying a particular student or a particular aspect of teaching and learning that all are trying.

***Lesson Study** – A year-long focus on a content area (such as mathematics) and an aspect of student behavior (such as collaborative problem solving) that begins with given/published lessons in that content area. Participants first refine a lesson and then teach it to students, with all but the teacher participant collecting data about what happens as the lesson is taught. Participants meet in colloquium either to further revise the lesson (for another teaching episode) or take the learning from that lesson to the next lesson).

***Portfolios for Educators** – Usually an individual activity (though it can be an accountability activity of an entire PLC), participants bring their portfolios to their PLC to share what they've collected and what the contents of the portfolio mean in terms of their learning.

****Problem-Solving** – Individuals or groups of educators in a PLC bring a classroom or school problem to the PLC to discuss. A variety of protocols can help the PLC address the problem: the Probing Protocol, the Inside/Outside (Jigsaw) Protocol, the Peeling the Onion Protocol, and the SWOT Protocol.

***Shadowing** – Members of a PLC shadow students within their own school or at other schools, either generally or looking for specific aspects of teaching and learning (such as student collaboration). During debriefing, participants share what they've noticed and learned and how they can apply their learning to their own work.

***Standards in Practice (Assignment Analysis)** – Analyzing assignments according to a variety of questions, ranging from what students actually need to know and be able to do to succeed on the assignment to what level of thinking (Bloom) the assignment requires to how rigorous it is. Student work related to the assignment might also be studied.

***Tuning Protocol** – This is one of the protocols that can be used to examine student work or teacher professional practice. It is a formal process for dialogue that alternates who is talking and who is listening. It is a way to probe and deepen discussion.

***Using Video to Change Practice** – Purchased videos can be used for this PLC activity although school-made videos (very difficult to make) can also be used, with permission of the videotaped teacher. Videos can be viewed generally or specifically, related to something the PLC is studying.

***Visual Dialogue** – A process of dialogue that requires participants to work on a large (3 by 5 foot) template on the wall (or several of them simultaneously) to address conditions in the environment (such as the number of reforms a school is trying to implement) or problems (such as stakeholders' differing points of view). Work on the templates is usually followed by a Gallery Tour so participants get to learn from all of the work done on the template.

* These are strategies from Easton, L. B. (2008). *Powerful designs for professional learning*. Oxford, OH: National Staff Development Council.

**These are strategies from Easton, L. B. (2009). *Protocols for professional learning*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

THE TRIAD PROTOCOL

FOR EXAMINING PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE²

SOURCE OF PROTOCOL: Unknown. Developed by Lois Brown Easton.

OVERVIEW OF PROTOCOL:

This protocol works much like the Success Analysis Protocol, except the subject is not necessarily a success. In fact, this protocol is quite useful for getting and giving feedback on work in progress – for example, revising curriculum, constructing assessments, or developing policies.

OTHER USES OF PROTOCOL: Like the Tuning Protocol, this is an all-purpose protocol. This protocol can be used in discussions to help people process ideas. It can help participants gain closure on ideas. Groups can do Triad Protocols on almost any aspect of education

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: Any number of participants divided into groups of 3. Groups can be job-alike. They can be random or self-selected. They can be carefully constructed to ensure diversity in each group.

TIME REQUIRED:

Each round features one of the triad as presenter, the others as responders or summarizers. Each round is between 10 and 15 minutes. In groups of three, with three presentations, the total time required is 30 to 45 minutes.

STEPS (with approximate timing for a 50 minute triad protocol):

Preliminary Step – Forming Groups (about 5 minutes)

1. Have people form small groups of 3.
2. Have participants decide who will be A, B, and C in their triad.

Step One – Round One (about 15 minutes)

1. A is the presenter in this round. This person describes an aspect of professional practice.
2. B is the discussant in this round. This person listens and responds to what A is saying with a comment, question, example, or detail. .
.building on what A is saying.

² Easton, L. B. (2009). *Protocols for Professional Learning*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

3. C is the observer in this round, listening quietly, saying nothing, and taking notes. After A and B have talked, C summarizes what they have said, adds comments, and presents some conclusions.

Step Two – Round Two (about 15 minutes)

Participants change roles so that each triad has a new A, B, and C, who perform the functions under Round One.

Round Three – Round Three (about 15 minutes)

Participants change roles so that each triad has a new A, B, and C, who perform the functions under Round One.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS:

The only critical element to this protocol is the seriousness of those engaged in the protocol – their willingness to focus on the topic or professional practice being discussed. If there is time and the whole group desires, the groups may want to share what they learned through the Triad Protocol. A facilitator can lead the entire group in a discussion of what the small groups learned, and a recorder can collect that information on chart paper.

TIPS FOR THE FACILITATOR:

A room facilitator can help establish the groups and set up the timing, announcing when groups should start and finish rounds, even announcing when each person should begin and end (the presenter, the observer, and the discussant). If the whole group is quite large, yielding many groups of three, the room facilitator might want to have each group agree to monitor itself, adhering to the times for starting and stopping each round or for the total protocol. If it's important to capture what each group learned, the facilitator can make sure that happens efficiently.

THE LAST WORD PROTOCOL³

FOR A NON-TEXT-BASED DISCUSSION

SOURCE OF PROTOCOL:

This protocol is also known as “Save the Last Word For Me” protocol, developed by Patricia Averette and included in the protocols used by the National School Reform Faculty (NSRF).

OVERVIEW OF PROTOCOL:

This protocol has multiple uses. It is great for processing ideas. It is also useful for bringing closure to a discussion. It can be used to look at student work and examine professional practice. It can even be used to address problems or issues. As Averette maintains, “The process is designed to build on each other’s thinking, and not to enter into a dialogue. Participants may decide to have an open dialogue about the text at the end of the 30 minutes.”

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS:

No more than 3 or 4 people should be in any one group, so if the whole group is large, it needs to be sub-divided into groups of 3 to 4. If possible, the number of people in each group should be the same (either 3 or 4) so that no group finishes before others. A single group does not need a facilitator, only a timekeeper to move the process along. Multiple small groups need a room facilitator to keep time and to move the process along in each group.

TIME REQUIRED:

One or more groups of three can complete this protocol in 30 minutes including discussion at the end; larger groups will need more time.

STEPS (with approximate timing of 30 minutes):

Step One: Identification of Significant Ideas (about 3 minutes)

- Each participant silently identifies what s/he considers to be (for him or her) the most significant idea addressed in the discussion, activity, issue, problem, piece of student work, other.

Step Two: First person (about 7 minutes)

³ Easton, L. B. (2009). *Protocols for Professional Learning*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

- One member of the group shares the significant idea but does not elaborate on it.
- The other 2 participants (3 if the group has 4 members) each have 1 minute to respond to what the first person says.
- They can agree/disagree, offer examples, share what the first person's statement made them think of, raise a question, contribute details, etc.
- The first person then has 2-3 minutes to respond to and build on what the others in the group said.

Step Three: Second person (about 7 minutes)

- The process for the first person is repeated with the next person in the group.

Step Four: Third person (about 7 minutes)

- The process for the first person is repeated with the next person in the group.

Note: If there are 4 people in a group, the process continues for one more round.

(Optional) Step Five: Open discussion (as desired)

- The small group can have an open discussion with each other about what came up during the rounds.
- The small groups can come together to have an open discussion with each other about what came up during the rounds

Step Six: Debriefing (about 5 minutes)

- Each small group discusses how the protocol went and continues conversation openly.
- (Optional) The whole group can discuss how the protocol went and continue conversation openly.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS

One critical element is that the first person (the presenter in the round) must have "the last word."

TIPS FOR THE FACILITATOR:

Except for timekeeping for multiple small groups, this protocol is relative self-facilitating. The facilitator may want to have the group develop some norms for self-

facilitation, however, such as adhering to the time frames, avoiding side conversations, and resisting the impulse to discuss what each person says freely during the rounds.